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531 out which a village fair would seem devoid of colour and romance.

532 But whatever their distant origin may be, a strong and unmistakable Hungarian quality permeates these articles. It is the same in the primitive decorations cut into the stone of early cathedrals, in the elaborate gate roof of Transylvanian peasant-farms in which the axe of the art-loving farmer imitates on a miniature scale the mighty mass of medieval castles, in the coloured glazing of brittle ginger-cakes which cover the stands of village fairs, and in the thousandfold articles used in the daily life of the Hungarian peasant of today.

Among the features which lend to the Hungarian style its particular character, the most typical are the sharp colour contrasts and that peculiar transposition which reduces the underlying *motif* to a simplified stylization — human figures, birds, animals, the miraculous stag, geometric elements woven into arabesques, and, most frequent of all, flower *motifs* and leaf-designs borrowed from Hungarian plant-life. The asymetric use of the latter offers an infinite field to the inventiveness of the primitive artist, who is limited only by the space to be decorated and by the functional character of the decoration which is a correlative element of his art.

Human or animal figures are generally presented on a field which ignores perspective. Their presentation betrays an astounding sense of perception, but by a peculiar inversion nothing is depicted exactly as it appears in nature, but stylized, transformed, simplified, and as if ennobled by the inner eye, enriched by the recreative imagination of the primitive artist. The leaf and flower-designs appear usually on a strongly contrasted monotone base. The wealth of these *motifs* surges in a whirling deluge of colour and form. It is remarkable that the

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532 continuity of tradition in the products of different epochs and the affinity of character and style of articles produced in distant regions are so strong that the identity of Hungarian peasant-art through time and space can readily be established not only by the expert, but by the eye of the discriminating amateur as well.

531 291 We have mentioned that Hungarian folk-art, other than folk-music and the dance, is typically applied art of a decorative character, and that it embraces everything the Hungarian peasant wears on his person and uses in his household or around his farm. In these circumstances it is only too natural that the Hungarian peasant should give his utmost when making his finery in which he parades before his fellow villagers, which he wears for church and fairs, in which he marries, in which he might be buried, or which his grandchildren and great-grandchildren will wear on such occasions long after he has passed away. But while in practically all other fields of his artistry the elements of his activity are pre-determined by immediate purposefulness, in costume-art the functional elements and the decorative are often subject to fashion which sometimes sweeps away all other considerations. Even here, though, the functional appears behind the surface: the urge of the fashionable is more than a mere sense of imitation or the desire to be up to the supposed call of the times; it is also the wish to be noticed, to be remarked, to be admired, and to be desired. Fashion, of all peoples and of all ages, has for immediate purpose the captivation of the male. If we scrutinize the inherent sense of Hungarian peasant-fashions, or what we might call the costume psychology of Hungarian peasantry, we immediately see how true this is. To the marriageable girl, within the style of her region, custom sets practically no limits in the selection of form and of